

- 2 -

sectional area of said apertures of said panel members closer to said backwash water inlet.

Amend claims 6 and 7 as follows:

6. [Amended] A filter underdrain assembly as in claim 3 wherein said air passageway is formed generally as [takes the form of] a hat section, said hat section having perforations positioned below said upper surface of said panel member.

7. [Amended] A filter underdrain assembly as in claim 3 wherein said air passageway is formed generally as [takes the form of] a hat section, said air passageway having perforations extending through said upper surface of said panel member.

Amend claim 18 as follows:

18. [Amended] Filter underdrain apparatus including a backwash water inlet for controlling backwash water flow maldistribution from [a] said backwash water inlet, said filter underdrain apparatus [in an underdrain assembly] comprising a plurality of panel elements assembled adjacent each other to form a grid like underdrain, each panel element having multiple punched bridges in a surface thereof, each bridge defining a pair of water inlet/outlet slotted apertures and wherein the number and size of said punched bridges and slotted apertures respectively are [can be] varied from panel element to panel element, said panel elements furthest away from said backwash water inlet having a lesser number of bridges or smaller slotted apertures from said panel elements nearer to said backwash water inlet, said panel elements being operable to provide a substantially equalised water flow through the underdrain assembly from said panel elements.

Amend claim 26 as follows:

26. [Amended] Filter underdrain assembly including a backwash water inlet for controlling backwash water